

# First record of Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush *Cichladusa ruficauda* for Cameroon

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**Première mention de la Cichladuse à queue rousse *Cichladusa ruficauda* pour le Cameroun.** Le 26 février 2010, une Cichladuse à queue rousse *Cichladusa ruficauda* a été observée dans un jardin à Douala, Cameroun. Ceci constitue la première donnée pour le pays de cette espèce, dont l'aire de distribution le long de la côte s'étend ainsi d'environ 600 km vers le nord.

On 26 February 2010, from the balcony of the Hôtel Foyer du Marin overlooking the harbour of Douala, Cameroon, we noticed a slender, thrush-like bird with a bright rufous tail contrasting with the more brownish-rufous upperparts in the dense scrub of the garden below. The head-sides were grey with well-marked dark lores and a dark eye-stripe. The breast, upper belly and flanks were pale greyish, while the rest of the underparts were dirty white to creamy buff. The eyes were dull red and the legs slaty grey. The bird was smaller and slimmer than a nearby African Thrush *Turdus pelios*. It often disappeared for some minutes, then appeared again in an open spot within the dense vegetation. The bird seemed rather skulking but not shy, as it once came as close as c.1 m while foraging in a palm tree. We observed it through binoculars for c.15 minutes from a distance of c.10 m. After consulting Borrow & Demey (2004), we identified it as a Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush *Cichladusa ruficauda*. The observed features made identification straightforward. We took a few poor-quality photographs on which the key features are visible (Fig. 1).

Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush principally occurs in thickets and savanna with ivory palm



**Figure 1.** Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush / Cichladuse à queue rousse *Cichladusa ruficauda*, Douala, Cameroon, 26 February 2010 (K. Lambeets)

*Hyphaene ventricosa* and oil palm *Elaeis guineensis*, plantations, dry lowland baobab–acacia woodland or secondary forests, but is also found around houses and gardens (Keith *et al.* 1992, Collar 2005). Its known range extends from the southern Gabon coast and the lower Congo River to the south-western Central African Republic, south through west Angola, just reaching Namibia in the extreme north-west (Borrow & Demey 2004, Collar 2005). The northernmost coastal record is from a garden in the small town of Omboué, Gabon, in September 2003 (N. Borrow *in Bull. ABC* 11: 73). There seem to be no records from the relatively well-watched Libreville area (N. Borrow *in litt.* 2010). Our record thus extends the species' range north along the coast by c.600 km and is the first for Cameroon.

## Acknowledgements

We thank Nik Borrow and Ron Demey for providing information concerning the occurrence of Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush in western Africa and Hans Matheve for helping with literature.

## References

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Received 5 April 2010; revision accepted 29 April 2010.